



Understanding Antisemitism Today

What is Antisemitism?

Antisemitism can be described as hatred, discrimination, fear, and/or prejudice directed toward Jews as individuals or as a group. Antisemitism is based on age-old stereotypes and myths that target Jews because of their religious beliefs, religious and cultural practices, identity as a people, or connection (real or perceived) to the State of Israel.

What is the Scope of the Problem?

- Already at a record high, from 2022 to 2023, incidents of antisemitism rose 140 percent in the U.S. (ADL). In California, anti-Jewish hate crimes rose from 189 in 2022 to 289 in 2023, an increase of 52.9 percent.
- JCRC's Survey of Bay Area Jewish Identity found that 36 percent of respondents had experienced or directly witnessed antisemitism in the two months following the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack against Israel.
- 73 percent of Jewish college students surveyed reported experiencing or witnessing antisemitism since the beginning of the 2023 school year (ADL/Hillel International).

What is the Impact of Antisemitism?

- 61 percent of Jews in JCRC's 2023 Survey of Bay Area Jewish Identity reported feeling less safe than they did the previous year, and 22 percent feel much less safe.
- Many Jews are feeling isolated, scared, unwelcome and hesitating to publicly identify as Jewish.
- Most Jews in the Bay Area are deeply dissatisfied with how antisemitism is being handled in K-12 schools, higher education and government.

How Can Antisemitism be Recognized?

- Antisemitism comes in many forms, such as microaggressions, Holocaust jokes, swastikas and other hateful graffiti on Jewish buildings, litmus tests for Jews about Israel, and violent rhetoric or physical assaults.
- Being able to recognize antisemitism is sometimes challenging as it is about political topics, like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, or using code words (a.k.a. dog whistles) to talk about Jews.
- It most often contains tropes, stereotypes, and/or conspiracy theories about Jews that have been passed down for generations, such as having Jews having outsized power and control, or being greedy and ruthless. Knowing these tropes is critical to recognizing antisemitism.

What Can I Do About Antisemitism?

- Reach out to your Jewish family members, friends, neighbors, and colleagues to understand more about their experiences with antisemitism.
- Be an ally by calling out antisemitism when you see it and reporting it when necessary.
- Learn more about Jewish identity and antisemitism by checking JCRC's Here I Am initiative.